

MISCELLANEOUS.

BRITISH TREATMENT OF GERMAN MISSIONARIES.

A circular has reached us, edited by the Rev. W. Stark and published under the auspices of the Evangelical Pressverband of Germany at Berlin-Steglitz, which contains extracts from depositions made by American, German and Swiss missionaries concerning English treatment of Christian missionaries in German South Africa during the present war. The opening sentences of the circular are as follows:

"But a few months ago England was considered to be the nation most interested in the cause of missions, and the English government did all in its power to spread the Christian religion and culture among the heathen. The English Bible and missionary societies were famous and held in high esteem throughout the world. Her missions were looked upon as models.

"Now this same England is charged with having ruined for a long time to come the flourishing mission stations of German as well as Swiss and American mission societies by her method of warfare in the colonies. English soldiers and officers have stained the reputation of the white race among the blacks; they committed thefts, broke open safes, ill-treated defenseless white women in presence of the negroes, unjustly imprisoned American citizens, and paid rewards for the capture of Germans by the blacks...."

In the following we quote extracts giving in part some of the depositions of eye-witnesses.

Missionary A. Orthner, who recently returned from Cameroon where he had been for years active in the cause of the Baptist Mission relates: "The station Nyamtang was attacked by the English on November 6. We were just returning from dinner. When we stepped out on the veranda dozens of rifles were pointed at us and we were dragged down from the steps by soldiers. The wife of Missionary Wolff was treated in the same manner. We stood in the fierce tropical sun and were not even permitted to put on our sun helmets.... We were now permitted to enter our house which was, however, surrounded by soldiers. But they took our goats, chickens, and what other things we had.... We now began to pack up. I made seven packs of 50 pounds each, and we were then conducted over Jabassi to the coast. It soon appeared that of my seven packs the three most important, containing my papers, letters and 1555 marks in silver, as well as the necessary clothing, were gone.... I was now deprived of money and necessary clothing. Our own food supplies had been confiscated and we were fed on bad 'corned beef' and 'fresh herring,' the latter having been taken from the negroes.

"Two weeks we were confined in the prisoners' camp at Duala. The house where we were interned was surrounded by a high fence and was

guarded. On the veranda of the second story in which we were confined six soldiers kept guard while two others were stationed at the entrance. Whenever we went into the yard we had to wait until a negro soldier deliberately took up his gun and followed on our heels. The ladies had their quarters elsewhere but received no better treatment. Some of them underwent experiences which cannot be recounted here and show that the English officers are the responsible parties and that they are mean characters. We were subjected to all manner of insults. One officer said if he had his way we should simply be shot down so that we and all Germans might be wiped off the face of the earth. On November 22 we were ordered to get ready; each one was permitted to take 50 pounds of luggage. In the presence of the natives we were compelled to carry our own packs, which is here looked upon as a great disgrace. With wives and children we were taken on board the steamer Appam. A certain Mrs. Schwartz, though she was *enceinte* and the physician considered her condition serious, was compelled to clamber up the side of the ship which lay in the harbor. Twenty-four hours later the child was born.

Rev. Orthner relates further that he was given to understand the conditions of his imprisonment might be ameliorated if he would consent to write a report of "German Atrocities." Missionary Wolff was actually offered his freedom on condition that he would write such an article. But these men knew of no German atrocities and openly said so, and Mr. Wolff sent them an article about English barbarities. It may be mentioned here that the latter was taken prisoner in spite of his American citizenship.

The full report of the plundering of the station of Nyamtang was first published in the *Detroit Evening Post*. It was verified by the missionary Valentine Wolff, United States citizen and fellow worker at the Mission of Nyamtang.

Missionary Wolff tells in his report how the English and their black troops of about 10,000 negro soldiers attacked and plundered Nyamtang; how the soldiers rummaged through the missionaries' rooms and packed everything available in the way of money, watches, and valuables into their knapsacks. In his deposition he says:

"When, soon after, a colonel and a few other officers appeared and I expressed my surprise that the English should thus attack a mission station, and complained of the ill treatment I had received at the hands of the English soldiers, he retorted: 'War is war.' On calling his attention to the fact that we were American citizens, he replied that he had orders to take prisoners all white persons without exception and that we would have to be ready to depart the next morning.... The English who had remained on the grounds after our departure had broken down the doors, broken open all chests and drawers and taken everything of value or sold the things to the natives. At first we could not believe this, but the news was confirmed from various sides....

"We also made the painful discovery that nine of our packs were missing. One of the Englishmen comforted me with the remark that they had no doubt been taken by mistake to the Government hut. But when, on the next day, on continuing our journey we saw them in the possession of English soldiers we knew that we had again been robbed....

"After my arrival in Duala I was summoned to appear before the commanding staff and asked to write something about German atrocities. I refused and was dismissed. Soon after came a second summons; and again

this outrageous request. After I had declared my readiness to write down what I had seen, I was permitted to go. The report which I handed in told of the shameless treatment which had been accorded me and the other missionaries. Hereupon I was again called up and sharply reprimanded because what I had written was a complaint against the English and French soldiers and cast suspicion on the whole staff. They had the impudence to go a step farther and suggest the prospect of being released in case I fulfilled their wish and wrote and sent in a report of the atrocities committed by German troops! Of course, that was out of the question. Under the charge that I as a United States citizen had not acted in accordance with the duties of a citizen of a neutral state and supported the German government in its aims and intentions my wife and I were brought to England as prisoners of war. Fortunately I, as an ordained missionary, was finally released and permitted to go to Germany."

Among the missionaries who were ill treated were several women. Charlotte Schüler writes:

"On Sunday, September 27, our missionaries were ordered out of the house by English and French, and lined up in the yard....On Wednesday we were brought on board the small English steamer 'Bathurst.' The men had to stay on deck day and night, whereas the women were given cabins. These were, however, in such a condition that it was almost impossible to sleep in them. At midnight we were awakened and searched for money....No one bothered about getting food for us. The first two days we received nothing at all! On the third day some provisions were distributed. One man got a glass of ground pepper, I a piece of soap, and many others stuff not to be eaten. On the fourth day each one received two ships' biscuits and a salted herring. Later we were given salt meat and rice. The broth made of it was often green and the maggots floated on the surface....A large enamel pan had been given us and served about 22 persons as dish, dishpan and washbasin. Eighteen persons soon became ill because of this treatment. We were transported to the Gold Coast. Pelted with stones and spat upon by the natives, the women and children were taken away in large dirty auto-trucks. On Monday, December 7, we were taken on board the English steamer "Appam." All whites in the colony, Germans as well as the neutral Dutch, Swiss, and Americans, who were treated as prisoners of war, had been brought thither. We arrived in Liverpool, Monday, December 28....To our great delight several gentlemen of the U. S. Consulate came later and undertook to attend to our transportation to London. On the way from the "Appam" to the hotel we saw how some Liverpool street boys rolled a dead rat in the mud and threw it in the face of one of our ladies. We were also pelted with mud and stones."....

The missionaries of the Basel Mission, a Swiss and thus neutral mission, who worked in Cameroon, were treated in just as shameful a fashion. The director of this mission, Dr. Oehler, wrote in the official organ of the society, *Der evangelische Heidenbote*, with reference to the reports of the missionaries published in the *Basler Nachrichten*:

"These facts are serious charges against Great Britain, her policy and method of warfare. Without any necessity whatever England has carried the war into the colonies and thus spread this war of the nations over the whole earth. England has made the war a fight against the innocent and the women;

they were taken prisoner, dragged into captivity and treated with inconceivable brutality. The labor of peace of the mission was sacrificed to a warfare directed not only against state and army but also against private citizens, a method of warfare opposed to all fundamental principles of civilization."

This declaration, printed later in the *Basler Nachrichten*, caused the British Minister at Berné to protest. He said:

"In Cameroon the missionaries were treated with all possible courtesy. They were taken to England because it was considered more humane to intern them in a milder climate. The assertion that they met with brutal treatment is without foundation whatever."

To his bold protest of the English Minister unsupported by facts Dr. Oehler, the director of the Mission, made an unequivocal reply which appeared in the *Basler Nachrichten* of February 25:

"I stand by my words in spite of the denial of the English Minister....

"In support of my statements and opinion I mention first the persons interviewed by myself, the two women Link and Hecklinger, the ordained missionaries Lutz, president of the Cameroon mission, Hecklinger, member of the board of governors, missionary Guthrod, Wittwer, Bärtschi and Wöll. I am ready to name 20 or 30 more witnesses, some of them living in Switzerland, for any one who considers further proof necessary. The witness of the Basel Missionaries is confirmed by that of the German Baptist missionary, Märtens. His sick wife, after she had gone through experiences like the above in Cameroon, died in a hospital on the Gold Coast, heartlessly treated by an English nurse, but humanely by a negress. The dying woman was denied a visit of her husband until her senses began to leave her."

Dr. G. Vöhringer testifies in a deposition that in Lagos German civilians were taken prisoners and packed so closely in a transport that the men could neither sit nor lie down.... Not only all their money but their last cigar had been taken from them. At one time the drinking water was actually poured into a slop pail and then offered them. When they complained a British officer declared: "It is all one and the same if the German pigs have water or not."....

"The wife of one missionary had become deathly ill from exhaustion. Her urgent request that she be allowed to speak once more with her husband was not granted. When she was dying and no longer able to talk he was allowed to come and stay with her until death set in.

"The toilet arrangements were so bad that.... This was an existence made unbearable by shame and rage...."

Pauline Kessler of the German Baptist Mission at Cameroon reports:

"The beginning of December a soldier of the colonial troop was murdered at Lohat, 4 or 5 hours journey from us; one of his hands was cut off and, together with his rifle, brought to the English. A reward is said to have been paid. Soon after some workmen who had been employed by the German government but were now dismissed, were attacked, robbed and murdered. Their hands, too, were brought to Duala. On December 23 a negro soldier from Jubassi was traveling together with a missionary scholar from Nyamtang to Ndogongi to bring us a message. On December 24 he and the mission scholar were found murdered near our station. Rifles and hands were in this case, too, delivered to the Englishmen. We saw both soldier and scholar lying dead and mutilated near our station."

That English soldiers offered the blacks money for the heads of Germans is proved beyond doubt by a deposition made by the American missionary Valentine Wolff. A reward up to 50 shillings was placed by the British government on the head of every German.

"As the result of this," says Reverend Wolff, "sailor Nickstadt and Quartermaster Schlichting, both belonging to the steamer 'Kamerun' lying in the harbor of Duala, were attacked and murdered by the natives. Nickstadt was drowned and Schlichting hewn to pieces with bush knives."

Rev. Director Stark sent a telegram to missionary Chr. Gehr, at Calw, Württemberg, requesting confirmation of this statement by wire, and received the following reply:

"Stark pressverband für Deutschland evanpresse berlinsteglitz.

"I confirm that the merchants Erich Student and Nikolai, also seaman Fischer were fearfully mauled by the natives on the Sanaga and that Nickstadt was drowned and Schlichting murdered. Merchant Student saw a circular according to which 50 shillings were set on the head of every German by the English. Missionary Chr. Gehr."

"After comparison I attest that this answer has not been garbled.

(Signed) Chr. Gehr, Missionary."

OUR THERMOMETER.

BY THE EDITOR.

It is a peculiar phenomenon in history that the different nations have measured temperature by thermometers invented by men not of their own nationality, and the explanation of this also throws light on the mental make-up of the respective peoples. The English, most conservative of all, cling to the first method of measurement and still measure temperature by the thermometer as first used by its inventor, a German professor of physics at Königsberg. Fahrenheit placed zero at the temperature of the very coldest day he had experienced in his own city of Königsberg, and this zero is still the zero for every English mind. The degrees in which he measured were accidental, and the freezing point fell on the degree 32. His invention was practical, and so the English government introduced it into the navy for official measurement of temperature. This settled the question, and no change has occurred down to the present day, for if the English mind accepts one method of action it will stick to it until the end of time. The English have clung to the Fahrenheit scale although there are some very obvious criticisms to be made concerning it. The zero point is purely accidental, and the temperature-points which are of special importance in the field of natural phenomena fall on integral degrees, these points being distributed over the scale in the haphazard fashion characteristic of the Fahrenheit system. The two temperature-points of greatest significance for life on this earth are certainly the freezing-point of water and the point at which water boils under normal conditions. It was a Frenchman, Réaumur by name, who had the practical sense to adopt as his basal temperatures the freezing-point and the boiling-point of water. He called the freezing-point zero and fixed the boiling-point at 80 degrees. As soon as his obviously well-designed reform was made, Germany adopted his system and it was soon in general use in that country.

But there is one point in Réaumur's system which is not practical. He divided the most important portion of his thermometer-scale into 80 degrees,